

March 6, 2001

Resolved, That Catherine and Raymond Jansen, are here recognized in the United States Capitol for their many years of unselfish service to the Long Island community and will be presented with this Proclamation in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION
TO ESTABLISH A COMMISSION
FOR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW
OF THE FAA

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2001

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing a bill calling for a tough, comprehensive review of the Federal Aviation Administration. The legislation would establish a commission to focus on the critical need to improve aviation safety and to reduce airline delays. It would examine both air traffic services and safety oversight by the FAA, and make recommendations on both the organizational structure and processes of the agency.

This is the perfect time, with a new administration entering the White House, for an unbiased, impartial and independent commission to begin working toward a solution to make our skies safer and our airports more efficient. We owe it to the American traveling public to make our skies as safe as possible and to put an end to the horrendous delays we so often hear about and experience.

We should all be concerned about aviation safety. As air travel has increased, we have seen increases in runway incursions, operational errors among air traffic controllers, and near midair collisions. In 1999, one in five flights arrived late, with each delay averaging about 50 minutes. According to Ken Mead, inspector general for the Department of Transportation, when cancellations are added in, it's nearly one in four. A total of 1.5 million flights were delayed or canceled last year.

Since 1978, the number of daily departures has doubled and the number of passengers has risen 250 percent. In 1999, U.S. airlines carried 694 million passengers on 13 million flights. As air travel continues to increase, we need to ask whether FAA is up to the job of adequate safety oversight, and whether Congress can do more to guide the agency.

Mr. Speaker, the Boeing Company recently called for the need for a new air traffic control system and even offered to fund improvements to the system themselves.

A recent letter from D.J. Carty, chairman, president and CEO of American Airlines, says that American continues to be concerned about the airline industry's ability to serve the public transportation needs due to air traffic control and airport capacity constraints.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, representing over three million businesses, recently stated that the air transport crisis is damaging our economy with delays and congestion costing industry and its shippers over \$5 billion annually. Tom Donohue, Chamber president stated that skyrocketing demand and stagnant capacity are crippling the nation's aviation network and that we need a national strategy to streamline runway and airport con-

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

struction and modernize our outdated air traffic control system.

Mr. Speaker, I also point out that operational errors among air traffic controllers are up significantly, as controllers try to cope with increasing traffic bearing down on crowded hub airports. At the same time these errors are up, the FAA has announced a plan to significantly reduce the number of operational supervisors available to assist and monitor that traffic. These errors have risen by 25 percent in the past two years alone.

In addition, runway incursions continue to go up, raising cries of alarm from the National Transportation Safety Board, the Office of Inspector General, and the Congress. The inspector general told the transportation appropriations subcommittee seven months ago "this safety issue is one that demands constant high-level attention," so we called for higher budgets, monthly reports and a national summit on the issue. Yet the most recent report shows that runway incursions have not gone down. They continue to go through the roof.

In addition, FAA has been unable to address the growing problem of airline delays. In the summer of 1999, delays were so high that the FAA announced a special review of its traffic management programs. This review concluded that the agency could do a lot more to provide efficient movement of aircraft around the country. Immediate improvements were promised. However, the delays of the past summer were just as high as the year before, if not worse.

The American traveling public is getting tired of these horrible delays. Business meetings are canceled, family gatherings are disrupted, and commercial deals are passed up when airline commerce does not flow smoothly. I hear my colleagues complain practically every day about the incredible and unacceptable airline delays. For those of us who fly often, our quality of life is greatly diminished because of this problem.

The commission I propose would take a comprehensive approach, and it would focus on ways to improve aviation safety for the benefit of all Americans. Specifically, the bill would establish a Commission for Comprehensive Review of the FAA. It would look at both air traffic services and safety oversight by the agency, and make recommendations on both the organizational structure and processes of the agency. However, the recommendations must address FAA's organization within the existing structure of government, rather than through privatization.

The commission would have 24 members appointed by the President, and would include representatives from airlines, airports, employee unions, and pilots as well as the DOD and other relevant federal entities. The legislation requires that the commission request must be submitted to the Congress within one year of enactment.

Mr. Speaker, there is a great opportunity for the new administration to start off with a fresh approach in aviation. It is the perfect time for an unbiased, impartial and independent commission to present new findings—focusing on aviation safety—to help guide the FAA in the right direction for the future.

The recommendations from this commission could be extremely helpful to the new Presi-

dent and the new Congress as we consider how to make our aviation system more safe and efficient for the U.S. citizens and those who visit our country.

Ideally, as soon as the commission reports its findings, legislation could be considered by Congress to implement the recommendations so that we can quickly move forward to make the changes needed to correct the long-standing problems at the FAA.

H.R.—

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Commission for Comprehensive Review of the Federal Aviation Administration Act".

SEC. 2. COMMISSION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a commission to be known as the Commission for Comprehensive Review of the Federal Aviation Administration (referred to in this section as the "Commission").

(b) FUNCTIONS.—The functions of the Commission shall be—

(1) to review existing and alternative options for organizational structure of air traffic services, including a government corporation and incentive based fees for services;

(2) to provide recommendations for any necessary changes in structure of the Federal Aviation Administration so that it will be able to support the future growth in the national aviation and airport system; except that the Commission may only recommend changes to the structure and organization of the Federal Aviation Administration that are within the existing structure of the Federal Government;

(3) to review air traffic management system performance and to identify appropriate levels of cost accountability for air traffic management services;

(4) to review aviation safety and make recommendations for the long-term improvement of safety; and

(5) to make additional recommendations that would advance more efficient and effective Federal Aviation Administration for the benefit of the general traveling public and the aviation transportation industry.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENTS.—The Commission shall be composed of 24 members appointed by the President as follows:

(A) 8 individuals with no personal or business financial interest in the airline or aerospace industry to represent the traveling public. Of these, 1 shall be a nationally recognized expert in finance, 1 in corporate management and 1 in human resources management.

(B) 6 individuals from the airline industry. Of these, 1 shall be from a major national air carrier, 1 from an unaffiliated regional air carrier, 1 from a cargo air carrier, 1 from the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, and 1 from the National Association of State Aviation Officials.

(C) 3 individuals representing labor and professional associations. Of these, 1 shall be from National Air Traffic Controllers Association, 1 from the Air Line Pilots Association, and 1 from the Professional Airways Systems Specialists.

(D) 2 individuals representing airports and airport authorities. Of these, 1 shall represent a large hub airport.

(E) 1 individual representing the aerospace and aircraft manufacturers industries.

(F) 1 individual from the Department of Defense.

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(G) 1 individual from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(H) 2 individuals from the Department of Transportation. Of these, 1 shall be from the Federal Aviation Administration and 1 from the Office of the Secretary of Transportation.

(2) TERMS.—Each member shall be appointed for a term of 18 months.

(d) FIRST MEETING.—The Commission may conduct its first meeting as soon as a majority of the members of the Commission are appointed.

(e) HEARINGS AND CONSULTATION.—

(1) HEARINGS.—The Commission shall take such testimony and solicit and receive such comments from the public and other interested parties as it considers appropriate, shall conduct at least 2 public hearings after affording adequate notice to the public thereof, and may conduct such additional hearings as may be necessary.

(2) CONSULTATION.—The Commission shall consult on a regular and frequent basis with the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Defense, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

(3) FACA NOT TO APPLY.—The Commission shall not be considered an advisory committee for purposes of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

(f) ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS AND STAFF.—The Federal Aviation Administration may give the Commission appropriate access to relevant documents and personnel and shall make available, consistent with the authority to withhold commercial and other proprietary information under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the "Freedom of Information Act"), cost data associated with the acquisition and operation of air traffic service systems. Any member of the Commission who receives commercial or other proprietary data from the Federal Aviation Administration shall be subject to the provisions of section 1905 of title 18, United States Code, pertaining to unauthorized disclosure of such information.

(g) TRAVEL AND PER DIEM.—Each member of the Commission shall be paid actual travel expenses, and per diem in lieu of subsistence expenses when away from such member's usual place of residence, in accordance with section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(h) DETAIL OF PERSONNEL FROM THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall make available to the Commission such staff, administrative services, and other personnel assistance as may reasonably be required to enable the Commission to carry out its responsibilities under this section.

SEC. 3. REPORT OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days after receiving the final report of the Commission and in no event more than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation, after consulting the Secretary of Defense, shall transmit a report to the Committees on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, Appropriations, and Finance of the Senate and the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Appropriations, and Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

(b) CONTENTS.—The Secretary shall include in the report to Congress under subsection

(a) a final report of findings and recommendations of the Commission under section 2(b), including any necessary changes to current law to carry out these recommendations in the form of proposed legislation.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO ELIMINATE THE PERSONAL EX- EMPTION PHASE-OUT AND THE ITEMIZED DEDUCTION PHASE- DOWN

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2001

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing three pieces of legislation to refine the tax proposal put forward by President Bush. Let me state at the outset that I fully support President Bush's tax proposal as he laid it out. I think it is appropriate for the times and well-designed. Even so, there is no legislation or proposal that cannot be improved upon. And so I offer these three bills in this spirit and in the belief that the President in all likelihood would and should support them.

This bill takes as its starting point the income tax rate reductions proposed by President Bush, phased-in over ten years. I have included these rate reductions to provide the context for my proposed refinement, which is to repeal the phase-down of itemized deductions and the phase-out of personal exemptions contained in the current code. These provisions are sometimes known by the names of Pease and PEP, the former named for its originator, Congressman Don Pease, a distinguished Member of the Ways and Means Committee during the 1986 Tax Reform Act, and the latter an acronym for personal exemption phases-out.

The income tax contains a number of unfortunate provisions that phase-out various credits, exemptions, and deductions. For example, the amount an individual can take as itemized deductions falls for married taxpayers with adjusted gross income (AGI) over a \$132,950 threshold. These taxpayers see a reduction in their total itemized deductions at the rate of 3 percent for every \$1,000 earned over the threshold. The proportion of a taxpayer's itemized deductions that can be lost due to this provision is capped at 80 percent of their otherwise allowable deductions. Similarly, for 2001 a taxpayer's allowable personal exemptions are reduced by 2 percent for every \$2,500 over and above \$199,450 in AGI. This provision raises the marginal tax rate by .8 percent for affected taxpayers.

The itemized deduction phase-down and the personal exemption phase-out exist for only one reason—to increase taxes on the affected taxpayers. Even more troubling, they do so by significantly increasing tax complexity. Even worse, they raise taxes by raising marginal rates and they do so, not through an explicitly higher statutory tax rate, but through a hidden device.

The reduction of marginal tax rates is a hallmark of the Bush tax proposal. High marginal

tax rates discourage people from investing, saving, creating new businesses, and so forth. Reducing these rates is therefore one of the effective things we can do to ensure a stronger economy in the future. The bill I am introducing today eliminates two hidden marginal tax rate increases and is, therefore, completely consistent with the strategy of the Bush tax rate reductions.

The bill I am introducing today is also fully consistent with sound tax policy because it makes the tax code more transparent. Taxpayers ought to be able to determine with little effort the tax consequences of their economic decisions. Hidden marginal rate increases are therefore inconsistent with sound tax policy and ought to be eliminated.

Further, everyone involved in tax policy agrees that the tax code is too complex, too costly to comply with, and too costly to administer. This bill certainly does not sweep away all the cobwebs of complexity, but it will make the code simpler for those affected by these two provisions.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ACHIEVE- MENTS OF DR. RAYMUND PAREDES, ASSOCIATE VICE CHANCELLOR AT UCLA

HON. HILDA SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2001

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the achievements of Dr. Raymund Paredes, the Associate Vice Chancellor at UCLA. Dr. Paredes opened the doors of opportunity for many students from Los Angeles County through his leadership, direction and execution of academic development programs. He has served not only as a professional role models for Latinos across the United States, but most importantly as a positive role model to the residents of the 31st Congressional District. He exemplifies how one person's commitment to public education can make tremendous changes towards improving our educational system. Raymund Paredes obtained his B.A., in English from the University of Texas at Austin, in 1964. He went on to earn his M.A. American Studies at the University of Southern California, 1969, and returned to the University of Texas at Austin for his Ph.D. in American Civilization, in 1973.

Dr. Paredes joined the faculty of UCLA's English Department in 1973. His research has focused on Mexican American literature and culture and the impact of demographic change on American culture, art, and education. A driving force in the emergence of Chicano studies as a discipline, he introduced Chicano literature courses to the UCLA curriculum and chaired the César Chávez Center for Chicana/o Studies from 1997 until 1999. He also served as an Associate Dean in the Graduate Division, overseeing the graduate fellowships unit as well as affirmative action programs from 1986 to 1989.

As Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Development since 1989, Raymund has been engaged in a broad range of activities encompassing K-12 and community college outreach, faculty recruitment and retention, curricular development, promotion of cultural and